

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-07 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 ACDA-10 SP-01 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 L-02 DRC-01 /062 W

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R 241639Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2766

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 08292

LIMDIS

E.O.: 11652 GDS

TAGS: PARM, GW, US

SUBJECT: DEFMIN LEBER VISIT TO WASHINGTON MAY 30-31

1. BRIG. GEN. BRANDT AND COLONEL ALTENBERG (MOD-POLICY AND PLANS) BRIEFED US ON THE TOPICS WHICH DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER MAY RAISE WITH SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK. THEY SAID LEBER WILL ARRIVE PREPARED TO DISCUSS PROSPECTIVE APPROACHES TO VARIOUS ITEMS ON DPC AND NPG AGENDAS AND PURSUE OTHER TOPICS, SUCH AS THE US SUGGESTION FOR WORKING GROUP ON WP FORCES, WHICH WERE RAISED AT FURSTENFELD-BRUCK. DETAILS FOLLOW.

2. BASIC ISSUES AND FORCE GOALS. MINISTER LEBER STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE REASONABLE CHALLENGE CONCEPT FOR NATO FORCE GOALS AND IS CONVINCED THAT SOMETHING MUST BE DONE TO STRENGTHEN NATO'S CONVENTIONAL OPTIONS. HE WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS PROSPECTIVE TREATMENT AT THE DPC MINISTERIAL OF ANTI-TANK, OF AIR DEFENSE, INCREASED WAR STOCKS, ECW AND MOBILE AA ITEMS, AS WELL AS QUESTIONS OF PRIORITIES BETWEEN THE BASIC ISSUES AND OTHER AD-70 ITEMS. LEBER, WE ARE TOLD, STRONGLY SUPPORTS PRIORITY

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TREATMENT OF THE BASIC ISSUES, ESPECIALLY AT, AIR DEFENSE AND WAR RESERVES, BUT WE GATHER THE MOD STAFF IS SOMEWHAT CONCERNED ABOUT THE DISSATISFACTION AMONG SOME OF THE EUROPEANS THAT THE AD-70 ISSUES, WHICH ARE NATO AGREED UPON, ARE BEING OVERTAKEN OR IGNORED BY NEW PRIORITIES.

3. RATIONALIZATION AND SPECIALIZATION. LEBER SUPPORTS NATIONALIZATION AND SPECIALIZATION EFFORTS, BUT BELIEVES THAT PRIORITIES MUST BE SORTED OUT AND EFFORTS MADE TO RATIONALIZE THE PROGRAM, AFTER THE JUNE EWG REPORT. WE UNDERSTAND HE WANTS A MORE SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM SET UP

WITH IMPROVED PROCEDURES, BASED ON LONG TERM US GOALS, FOR WHICH DPC APPROVAL SHOULD BE SOUGHT IN JUNE.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE; LEBER WANTS TO HELP REDUCE THE US SHARE TO 20 PERCENT, BUT BELIEVES A LARGER FRG CONTRIBUTION MUST REMAIN CONTINGENT ON UK WILLINGNESS TO INCREASE ITS SHARE. LEBER WILL RAISE THE ISSUE IN BONN THIS WEEK WITH UK DEFMIN MASON, BUT THE MOD STAFF CONSIDERS THERE IS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF UK FLEXIBILITY ON THE ISSUE AND THAT THE MATTER WILL LIKELY REMAIN UNRESOLVED.

5. NATO STRATEGY. LEBER MAY RAISE IN A GENERAL WAY THE TOPIC OF NATO STRATEGY. HE FULLY SHARES AND AGREES WITH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S "NATO TRIAD" CONCEPT; THIS IS ONE BASIC REASON HE SUPPORTS US EFFORTS TO IMPROVE CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY. LEBER MAY HOWEVER REVIEW FEW PRINCIPLES OF FRG THINKING, PARTICULARLY HIS BELIEF THAT CHANGES IN NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPTS

SHOULD NEVER PERMIT THE SOVIETS TO CONCLUDE THEY COULD "REGIONALIZE" A EUROPEAN WAR.

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6. COMMON ARMAMENT. LEBER IS CONSIDERING A MOD STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR US-FRG COOPERATION ON THE ROLAND MISSILE AND A NEW TANK. US PROCUREMENT OF THE ROLAND AND SOME KIND OF US-FRG COOPERATION ON THE NEXT TANK GENERATION, WITH EVENTUAL US PROCUREMENT FROM EUROPEAN SOURCES, WOULD HELP SET THE STAGE FOR BROADER NATO ARMS COOPERATION.

7. NORTHAG-CENTAG. LEBER IS LIKELY TO REFLECT THE MOD STAFF'S CONSIDERED VIEW THAT NATO'S MOST SERIOUS WEAKNESS IS CENTAG'S RIGHT FLANK RATHER THAN IN THE NORTHAG REGION. THE MOD BELIEVES THE GERMAN II CORPS COULD NOT EFFECTIVELY DEFEND ITS FRONT IF A MAJOR SOVIET ATTACK WERE MOUNTED VIA THE DANUBE APPROACHES, ESPECIALLY AS LONG AS FRENCH FORCES CANNOT BE INTEGRATED INTO A DEFENSE PLAN WHICH WOULD PERMIT MORE FLEXIBILITY IN DEFENDING THE AUSTRIAN FRONTIER. THE MOD STAFF IS QUICK TO ADMIT THAT NORTHERN DEFENSES NEED IMPROVEMENT BUT FOCUSES MORE ON THE DANUBE APPROACH, BY WHICH THE CENTAG RIGHT FLANK COULD BE TURNED.

8. OTHER. THE MOD HAS ALSO PREPARED POSITION PAPERS ON CONFIDENTIAL

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COB'S, FRG TAKEOVER OF ACW SITES, AND LOGISTIC COOPERATION, BUT LEBER IS NOT EXPECTED TO RAISE THESE ITEMS WITH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER.
HILLENBRAND

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